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METAPHYSICAL ELEMENTS IN SOCIOLOGY.

I.

EVER since the appearance of the *Cours de philosophie positive* of Auguste Comte, and the *Principles of Sociology* of Herbert Spencer, the scientific mind has been conscious of the presence of a body of phenomena which needed an explanation peculiar to themselves. Some aspect of this body had, of course, been treated in the works of Plato and Aristotle, and in later political philosophies. But the awakening of the spirit of scientific investigation brought with it the demand that, just as the phenomena of consciousness in individuals were being considered according to scientific principles, so the phenomena which were the objective results of the activities of those conscious individuals should also be studied. Psychology was for a long time simply a part of a philosophy. Modern thought, in securing for psychology a place in scientific research, has been able to make it a definite branch of learning, occupying a place in the hierarchy of knowledge between the physical sciences and philosophy, with a method of investigation all its own. Sociology seems at present to be undergoing the formative period which psychology has undergone; it seems to be slowly working out its place in the realm of thought. Much has been said concerning the relationship of sociology to the various sciences, but little concerning its relation to philosophy. In view of the unique place which psychology holds in reference to philosophical thought, and in view of the very vital relationship between the material with which the two sciences have to deal, it might prove to be worth our while to look into the relationship of sociology to philosophy; to ask whether there is a metaphysical element in sociology, and, in case there should be one, to ask what it is, and whether it is a necessary one, or whether it can be successfully eliminated.

In the consideration of the relation of sociology to metaphysics we are called upon at the outset to consider the province

of metaphysics, and the data upon which it is based; then to ask ourselves the same question with reference to sociology. With that before us, we are ready to pass to an attempt to establish a relationship between the two disciplines, in reference both to the content involved and the point of view taken by the knowing subject in his relation to that content.

Metaphysics deals with what is or exists. It starts from experience, since in any investigation we must start with what is nearest and best known to us. Its problem, then, is to attempt to find out the nature, meaning, and, more specifically, the final significance of reality. These are considerations which from the standpoint of science do not emerge; for science is content simply with taking the phenomena themselves. Metaphysics, however, when it looks into the nature of reality, seeks to find out the form that reality takes, whether it be material, conscious, and so on. But this is merely one part of the metaphysical problem. Science tries to get a generalized law of the behavior of things, but it does not concern itself with the question of how and why this law of behavior came to be what it is. Metaphysics takes up the search at this point and seeks some inner principle from which this law of behavior springs. This is the search for the meaning of reality; that is, *e. g.*, certain actions of an individual are understood only when we know what sort of a man he is, of what sort the character is which regulates those actions. When we inquire into the final significance of reality, we try to get, not alone the spring of all things, but also their final goal reduced to unity; in other words, to understand reality in the light of some all-comprehending unity.

Does experience give us reality? is the first question; and an examination will lead to the conclusion that we are confronted by a contradiction if we hold that behind phenomena there is a reality which is entirely simple and unrelated; for such a simple, unrelated reality could give itself no manifestation, and therefore there would be no phenomena. If the real cannot be simple and unrelated, then we must hold that the real must be thought of as internally complex; and not only that, but that it is of its very nature to manifest itself in phenomena, and so become the con-

tent of experience. Thus the reality of the phenomenal world and of our experience may be established; and not alone this, but it is also shown that the world of reality has an inner nature which can be conceived of after the analogies of experience. It does not necessarily follow, however, that reality must be thought of as coextensive with finite experience, for that would lead to the denial of much which, on other grounds, we shall find we are constrained to assert as real.¹

Having fixed the point of departure and aim of metaphysical thought, any such investigation must next determine the point of view from which it proceeds, and its method, which is inseparably connected with it. eMtaphysics arises out of a fundamental demand on the part of the subject for explanation deeper than that given by science, and is found to culminate in making its central principle one other than that of science. The individual may look at his world as entirely external to himself, and so he sees a plurality of events; but he cannot get farther than generalization and causal reference. The other and more direct mode of approach is through appreciation. By appreciation I mean a sympathetic identification of the subject or individual with the world in which the individual sees himself as an agent realizing his world in an experience which is individual for himself. He thinks himself as part of the stream of the world-process, and so looks at the rest of this stream as like himself in that it can be realized by him just as he realizes his own experience; or, in other words, he is at fellowship with the world, so that the distinction between subject and object is no longer an absolute one. In science this distinction is fundamental. This appreciative experience might be said to be somewhat analogous to the individual's sense of his own individuality in that he feels that he is himself, and that there is something about that experience which he cannot communicate to others by putting it into terms, but which experience is intensely real to him, and to him and for him only. It involves a feeling of unity, or rather of correlation of purpose, in himself and the world. As far as the place of appreciation in the interpretation of the objective world is concerned,

¹ ORMOND, *Foundations of Knowledge*, Part I, chap. 2.

naturalistic mechanism can give no meaning at all, for it can give only an infinite multiplicity of related, inert atoms which are both centerless and aimless.² Therefore, teleology and real meaning in the world of objective experience are gotten only through appreciation. Appreciation grasps unities, not particulars. An idealized and greatly extended example of this is given by Professor Royce when he speaks of a community of spiritual beings "who were so aware of their common relation to the true Self that their life together was one of intimate spiritual communion, so that the experience of each was an open book for all of them."³ In such a suppositious environment the most intimate experience of any one of the individuals would be immediately, or at will, the experience of any other individual, without using any medium of communication; this would apply, not only to present, but also to past experience as well.

The next question is to fix our starting-point from the side of sociology. We must first ask ourselves what constitutes society. Different answers have been given to this question; and whether society is or is not an organism, or some other thing, does not concern us here. What we want now is the notion "society" reduced to its simplest terms. Society implies human individuals interacting. This interaction of human individuals demands the more elementary conception of conscious wills, on the one hand, and an environment both physical and psychical, on the other. Now, the province of sociology is to study the phenomena resulting from the interaction of these conscious wills both on each other and on the environment. It must try to get at the influences which bring about these phenomena, and not merely describe them through generalization—for that would be only a shorthand register of events—but, as far as possible, to interpret them as a whole. Since societal phenomena are very complex, sociology is confronted with a problem of great intricacy, as it must seek to arrive at some unitary view of society. This complexity seems to make it necessary to make sociology superior to various subsidiary and special social sciences whose province it is

² WARD, *Naturalism and Agnosticism*, Vol. II, pp. 134 ff.

³ *Spirit of Modern Philosophy*, pp. 395, 396.

to investigate a particular class or portion of societary phenomena, and formulate certain conclusions, empirically derived, which shall be of use to sociology proper in coming to some explanatory principle for society as a whole. What is meant here may be brought out by a more or less concrete case. Sociology must unify the results of these special social sciences, but it may happen that extreme specialization will distort the perspective of the investigator; or it might be that certain phenomena might be assigned by some special social science to grounds which sociology would see to be inaccurate; *e. g.*, ascribing certain phenomena to racial grounds, which phenomena, however, are by another one of the special social sciences found to occur in mobs which are heterogeneous as far as race is concerned. Therefore it is the further business of sociology to resolve such inconsistencies and to correlate the results of the special sciences with reference to a fundamental unity. Just as biology includes morphology, zoölogy, embryology, and others, so must sociology embrace the special social sciences, as, *e. g.*, the general group of the political sciences including political economy, the philosophy of law, the theory of the state; or the group including archæology, comparative philology, and the comparative study of religions; or such sciences as criminology, etc. That sociology has a very extensive and complex field to study is further shown by examining recent works on sociology and noting what the various authors have made out to be the central principle in sociology. Each of these writers has made out a strong case for his own theory — so strong, in fact, that one conclusion that can surely be drawn is, that these principles, even if inadequate, are of such importance that an adequate sociological theory must include them as moments. Some of these theories have put down sociology as:

1. Philosophy of History (P. Barth, *Die Philosophie der Geschichte als Sociologie*).

2. An Application of Biology (Schäffle, *Bau und Leben des socialen Körpers*; Lilienfeld, *Gedanken über die Socialwissenschaft der Zukunft*; René Worms, *Organisme et société*).

3. Consisting in the Description of Social Facts (by statistics: Quételet,

Sur l'homme et développement de ses facultés, ou essai de physique sociale; De Greef, *Introduction à la sociologie*; Galton, *Inquiries into Human Faculty and its Development*; Pearson, *Grammar of Science*).

Or they have made the principle which should be sufficient to explain social phenomena :

1. Association (Izoulet, *La cité moderne*).
2. Division of Labor (Durkheim, *De la division du travail social*).
3. Imitation (Tarde, *Les lois de l'imitation*).
4. Struggle of the Races (Gumplowicz, *Der Rassenkampf*).
5. Consciousness of Kind (Giddings, *Principles of Sociology*).

Consequently we are prepared for Mr. Lester Ward's statement of what is involved in sociological investigation. He says :

By pure sociology, then, is meant a treatment of the phenomena and laws of society as it is, an explanation of the process by which social phenomena take place, a search for the antecedent conditions by which the observed facts have been brought into existence, and an ætiological diagnosis that shall reach back as far as the state of human knowledge will permit, into the psychologic, biologic, and cosmic causes of the existing social state of man.⁴

He then goes on to say that pure sociology must confine itself exclusively to what is, and not to what ought to be, which latter is the province of applied sociology. This latter part may not be neglected any more than pure sociology (since it necessarily puts the value-judgment central, it is very vitally connected with appreciation). Compare this with Professor Giddings's statement when he says that sociology

is a science that tries to conceive of society in its unity, and attempts to explain it in terms of cosmic cause and law. To accomplish such explanation it must work a subjective interpretation in terms of physical process. . . . The subjective process and the objective must be shown to be inseparable, each being at all times conditioned by the other.⁵

It will now be our problem to consider a number of the conceptions employed in sociological discussion, and to examine them to find out whether they involve anything that is philosophical, either in content or in point of view. Mr. Bosanquet has pointed out with great clearness that philosophy has been dealing with sociological problems in that it has investigated the state and other of the higher manifestations of the self in its relation to its

⁴ *Pure Sociology*, p. 4.

⁵ *Principles of Sociology*, p. 16.

environment; and so has sought to get rather the higher capabilities and possibilities of the self, its real inner nature, than to find out its particular state of manifestation at any particular time. Sociology, on the other hand, has busied itself with facts as they came before its observation, and with correlating them with stages of association that are commonly called lower.⁶ Just as in psychology you cannot explain the higher processes by exactly the same terms used in explaining the lower, and as "chemistry can say something of all material substances but it can say less in proportion, as of those which have biological significance," so sociology, having largely given its attention to the lower forms, has fallen short of the mark when it comes to treat of the higher, more complex self-manifestations in a complex environment, and thus has failed to achieve the unity sought for. On these grounds, may we not conclude for our purpose here that the unity that sociology seeks can be achieved only when we take into account the element of possible self-development, and so the ideal? This would, of course, introduce philosophy directly into the middle of our search for the social desideratum, viz., unity.

The work of Messrs. Giddings, Ward, Tarde, and Baldwin has shown very conclusively that the psychological, and therefore subjective, factor is of prime importance in sociological investigation; so that present appearances seem to warrant the opinion that the most fruitful field for the search for the unifying principle of societary phenomena is to be just this. It is significant to note M. Tarde's building all sociological explanation around the principle of imitation, and that Professor Giddings makes consciousness of kind central.

Let us take up, in the first place, the primary units of societary phenomena, viz., conscious individuals. Now, to understand the phenomena arising from the interaction of these individuals (for that is the problem of sociology) we must understand the individuals. To enter into such a discussion fully would take us too far afield, and we will confine ourselves to several of the more evident points. A conscious individual is a vastly more complex unit than the atom or the molecule which is the unit of physical

⁶ *Mind*, N. S., Vol. VI, pp. 2 ff.

science, in that it is a regular microcosm of thoughts, feelings, and volitions; and the motives from which it acts can very seldom, or at least not always, be detected from the actions themselves.

Some sociologists hold that the only valid sociology is one which treats the subject-matter exactly as the data of the physical sciences are treated. But Professor Baldwin has pointed out that social progress takes place according to a dual law—habit and accommodation; with the result that when we are studying social progress, in order to get the law of that development, we must remember that when any advance (accommodation) has taken place, and habit sets in, the basis for the next development is not the same as served for the last stages; and so to understand social progress, the investigator may not confine himself merely to the bare *functional* phenomena, but he must consider how the change in the matter of the process modifies the function. Then, in turn, the function modifies the matter, and thus by this dialectical movement social progress takes place.⁷ This points out clearly that the methods which obtain for physical processes are not adequate for the interpretation of phenomena of this sort. Furthermore, in view of the above, we can say that the mere laws of physical science are insufficient, since the situation to be investigated is so complex. M. Tarde, in his chapter on “Archæology and Statistics,” points out that statistics can deal only with imitations and their regularity, but that it cannot be applied to the “inventions” which must precede the imitations and without which the imitations would not exist (p. 137). “Only imitation, and not invention, is subject to law in the true sense of the word” (p. 142). It is not as though you had matter acting according to the law of motion, as physics would hold; what you really have is conscious selves acting according to teleological law.⁸ Perhaps it is possible for these units to be endowed with a certain capriciousness, a certain individuality of their own in reacting. Thus by this very nature of theirs—since they are wills—they make an extremely complex situation, and at the same time an inde-

⁷ *Social and Ethical Interpretations*, 3d ed., p. 494.

⁸ GIDDINGS, *Elements of Sociology*, p. 350.

scribable one; for we cannot get at those units entirely, since they each have their individual descriptions and appreciations, and, furthermore, since we cannot get at those appreciations descriptively. But as these appreciations are an essential and determining element in the make-up of these units, a real explanation of some social processes, or, in the extreme, of all societary processes, goes beyond description and into appreciation. The reason for this appears when we come to consider the real nature of social phenomena and ask ourselves whether in the last analysis, they do not all go back, for their explanation, to a sense of value, to a worth-attitude out of which the action arose. Take even such empirical concepts as those of economics; *e. g.*, What is it that regulates values? Some will say it is demand. What, then, regulates demand? Demand has, of course, many purely objective determinations; but when we get to those which are final, we find that we are on the plane of values. Or again, M. Tarde's discussion comes to the conclusion that imitations are the imitations of some inventions; that imitation presupposes an invention as its temporal prius. But in the last analysis the invention rests upon a worth-attitude,⁹ for without that there would be no incentive to invention; invention would not exist. All social actions in which there are ethical or æsthetic moments have this worth-ingredient. Similar examples might be multiplied. We might then say that when I interpret your social acts, what I really do is to interpret those in terms of your worth-consciousness which I attribute to you on the basis of my own experience, and which I conceive of as being like my own in its general make-up. When I, therefore, put this into terms which shall be socially available, when I try to explain such actions, to interpret them in a scientific way, what I am constrained to do is to use appreciatively descriptive terms. Professor James does this constantly in describing the experience of religious enthusiasts. There can be no doubt that the worth-content is appreciative, since it is always purposive. Professor Urban, who has been doing considerable work in this field—*i. e.*, the consciousness of value—holds that appreciative description of feeling or worth-attitudes is distinguished from scientific

⁹ For our purpose, the terms "worth" and "value" are synonymous.

description by its purpose. While the latter differentiates modifications of feeling in order to connect them causally with corresponding differences in sensation and ideal content, and communicates them only indirectly through these connections, the former discriminates their meanings, and communicates these differences in terms of projected ideals which are common to the consciousness with which the individual communicates.¹⁰ This would, of course, place a strong appreciative element at the heart of such a science, and involve it in a considerable debt to metaphysics. Professor Royce thinks that our perception of the reality of another self is in no wise gotten by description, since we cannot describe what it is that gives us the sense of reality with reference to his ideals, his aims, etc. The answer that he gives to the question of how we get the sense of the reality which we attribute to a friend, the genuine external existence that we attribute to the appreciation of the existence of our fellows, is that "all this is unintelligible except in so far as we recognize that we seemingly isolated and momentary beings do share in the organic life of one Self."¹¹ There is, however, a genuine "communion of spirits," and upon this is founded description.

An objector may protest against the term "matter" used above. But this will not alter the situation; for analyze that matter into whatever you will, whether it be vortices of motion or what not; by the very nature of your investigation you are cut out from calling them mind, and consequently they are still describable, and so cannot be the subject of appreciation, with the result that the difference in method—or, in other words, between the appreciative and the descriptive points of view—is still unresolved.

Or, looking at the question from another side, we have seen that these individuals which are the social units are, in the last analysis, conscious wills. Now, a sociology working on the basis of physical causation would say that these wills, and consequently the societary phenomena resulting from them, are

¹⁰ This is taken from a personal letter to the present writer.

¹¹ *Spirit of Modern Philosophy*, pp. 405-8.

entirely the result of mechanical causation.¹² But our ordinary experience—upon which a physical science is based—would say that those wills are free. Here there is a contradiction, both sides of which arising either from ordinary experience generalized, or else from ordinary experience directly, with the result that we are involved in the metaphysical question of freedom. In fact, some mention of the question in books on sociology has very recently come under the writer's observation.

After holding that philosophy is insight and wisdom rather than knowledge and understanding, that philosophy seeks an insight into principles of things, and that its progress is measured by the depth of the insight, Mr. Mackenzie says that scientific investigation is often "too narrow and too wide" to be adequate.

He [the scientist] limits himself to particular aspects of things which are meaningless apart from their relation to the whole, as if its nature were exhausted by the treatment of these particular aspects.¹³

This is in direct line with Mr. Bosanquet's contention that the sociologists who confine themselves to the extreme scientific view of the province and method of investigation have busied themselves entirely with the lower manifestations of the self, and have entirely neglected its possibilities, and so the field where the desired unity is most likely to be found. Furthermore, this is supported by Hegel's contention that anything, in order to be understood, must be conceived of as being related to its "other." In fact, it is of the very nature of phenomena for them to be relative. In the above contention Mr. Mackenzie has largely pointed out the general defect which applies in particular to the sort of sociology which wants to make the subject entirely positive and exact: the defects of the sociology which thinks its whole function is classification and generalization. Take one of these sociologies, grant them even that they can give a causal explanation of societary phenomena without being inconsistent with their postulate of method of procedure, and let us see how far they get. Let us see how far social forces reproduce exactly physical forces. The first glance reveals the fact that social force does not act

¹² Vide GIDDINGS, *Principles of Sociology*, pp. 365, 366.

¹³ *Introduction to Social Philosophy*, p. 45.

exclusively in an internal manner, but that, just as soon as you have social force manifesting itself, its effect is different qualitatively from the cause, in that an increment has been added from the inner store of the unit itself, viz., the self which is acted upon. This is nothing more than the psychological doctrine of apperception. Now, it can be asked: Does this not violate conservation of energy strictly interpreted? Moreover, the same social force does not produce the same social effect in every social unit. True, in the long run, it is found that individuals affected by practically the same environment will *probably* react in the same *general way*. Does not this difference of individual reactions indicate that to understand sociological reactions we cannot confine ourselves *exclusively* to the mechanical methods of physical science? The present writer does not propose to hold that sociology is a philosophy; but what is maintained here is that sociology, while being, in the general significance of the term, a science, is in reality a teleological science, or one that needs teleological methods, or the method of philosophy, to *supplement* the mechanical so that higher synthesis may be reached.

In reference to the causation involved in societary phenomena, Mr. Bosanquet points out that social causation, and the bringing of social facts under law and rational coherence, are very different from natural causation. In the former case it is largely motived cause.

The distinction between determination by law and determination by the presentation of law, and the relation of a conscious motive embodied in a political order to the facts and modes of behavior existing in natural surroundings and economic arrangements, are stated with perfect balance and clearness by Plato and Aristotle. Many one-sided constructions of social causation might never have been attempted had due attention been paid to their ideas.¹⁴

It seems to me that a reading of, and a little reflection upon, Schopenhauer would bring about the same result.¹⁵

¹⁴ *Mind*, N. S., Vol 6, p. 7.

¹⁵ *World as Will and Idea*, trans. by HALDANE AND KEMP, Books II and III; *Ueber die vierfache Wurzel des Satzes vom zureichenden Grunde*, 3d ed., chaps. 4-7.

Let us consider for a moment what a sociologist has to say about this. Professor Giddings holds that

the sociologist deals not only with causes that are not merely physical, but also with many that are not merely psychical. They are as much more complex than the merely psychical as the psychical are more complex than the merely physical.

He calls them sociological. He makes social causation different from other causation just as "protoplasm is different from certain quantities of oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, and carbon."¹⁶ Then, later, the most explicit statement of his notion of social causation is found when he says:

Specifically, sociology is an interpretation of social phenomena in terms of psychical activity, organic adjustment, natural selection, and the conservation of energy.¹⁷

Here, I take it, he has given what he considers to be the component parts of this social causation; but I fail to see how this explains it at all, for he is simply enumerating its factors; and he has said that just the difference between social causation and other causation is that between products and factors, and cites protoplasm as an example. He has contended for natural causation according to conservation of energy; but here, by his own statement, his analysis of social causation is not adequate, for combining those elements of oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, and carbon artificially will not give protoplasm, showing that there is something additional present. When he leaves these chemical elements and gets to protoplasm, he has left chemistry and is in another science—biology, a science which investigates a higher stage of cosmic evolution than chemistry. But just as the biologist no longer cares directly for these chemical elements, but concerns himself with the investigation of protoplasm, its movements and their results, so here Professor Giddings, having once realized the fact that the causation of the sociologist is not physical merely nor psychical merely, but sociological, ought to keep to his assertion and work on the basis of that, instead of going back to physical processes and forces. That he does go back to interpretation in terms of physical forces is shown when he says:

¹⁶ *Principles of Sociology*, pp. 416 ff.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 419.

If social will is conditioned by natural selection, not less is the power to convert will into deed conditioned by the conservation of energy;¹⁸

and then goes on to insist that all social process is subject to the principle of conservation of energy, as when, *e. g.*, he says:

If the available energy of the environment is wasted or in any way diminished, the social activity also must diminish. The evolution of new relationships of conscious association, and the accompanying development of personality, will be checked.

It is exactly analogous to a case in which the biologist should attempt to explain life-movements by calling them movements of oxygen, nitrogen, hydrogen, carbon, etc., and by translating them into terms of the movement of these elements, which would be an altogether fruitless task as far as real advancement in science is concerned.

Professor Giddings does not seem to be self-consistent here. We are entirely ready to admit that sociological causation is something unique, that it involves more than purely physical causation, just as protoplasm involves more than the above-mentioned chemical elements. And, consequently, we further contend that, since this sociological causation is, so to speak, a new product, the mode of interpretation which it demands must be different from that demanded by purely physical causation; in other words, that description must be supplemented by a moment of appreciation. Or, even admitting, for the sake of argument, that Professor Giddings's second diagnosis of social causation as physical process is a correct one, it in no wise vitiates the present contention that in an explanatory examination of social phenomena there is a moment of appreciation. That moment of appreciation, we would hold, is still present in what he calls interpretation "in terms of psychical activity;" for some of the factors entering into social phenomena are of such a nature as to require appreciatively descriptive terms in order that they may become more than merely private inner experiences, and so be used at all in the determination of the causes of the phenomena in which they figure.

There is not alone a distinction between the causation of

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

sociology and natural causation, but there is also a distinction to be made between the various kinds of evolution—cosmic, organic, and social or mental (the latter including the social). The difference between the integration of matter and the dissipation of motion, on the one hand, and adaptation to environment, on the other, is sufficiently great to warrant no further comment. The difference between organic and social evolution is not so obvious, although of prime importance. Mr. Ward expresses the distinction in a formula to this effect: "the environment transforms the animal, while man transforms the environment;"¹⁹ meaning that in organic evolution the animal is passive, while man reacts on his environment so rigorously as to change it, so that in the interaction of the two there is a constant spiral dialectic. Man reacts upon his environment, and by his reaction changes it; it, in turn, in its changed form reacts upon him, bringing about, not alone a change in him, but also a reaction by him; so that, through every action of man, it is in so far changed, and so presents an ever richer and more complex front. Professor Venn, in somewhat different connection and under different circumstances, brings out practically the same point when he says that when the objects under observation are conscious individuals, any conclusion which predicts future occurrences on the basis of generalizations of past experience will be invalidated just so soon as it is published, since by that fact of publication it affects those individuals on the basis of which it was made.²⁰ The reason for this would be that just as soon as the conclusion is made and falls into the hands of some individual whose actions it discusses, that very consciousness of the uniformity of actions in one direction or another will add another ingredient to the causal antecedents of that action. If it tells the individual that nine out of ten men do a certain thing—a fact that he has never before known—it may lead him, by reason of his desire to do the conventional thing, to perform that action; when before seeing the statement he would have been inclined to do the opposite. Or, if he be an individual of the "contrary" type, he may refrain

¹⁹ *Pure Sociology*, p. 16.

²⁰ *Empirical Logic*, pp. 575 ff.

from that action simply because the majority of men perform it. This is directly in line with the contention above (pp. 361 ff.) to the effect that social process reacts upon and effects changes in the social matter. Furthermore, social evolution is spiritual evolution; and we must note another difference between spiritual evolution, on the one hand, and cosmic and organic evolution, on the other, on the ground that the latter two proceed by slow and gradual accretions, with only slight variations arising for natural selection to work upon. But spiritual evolution proceeds by leaps and jumps, as history very conclusively shows, in so far that social progress cannot be accounted for without considering the prophets and geniuses who were the great forerunners of epoch-making movements, and then the slow approximation to their standards on the part of the mass of the people; and, therefore, not alone must the formula for social evolution take these facts into account, but it shows also that when we attack the problem of social evolution we must come to it armed with more than the evolutionary formula current in natural science, if we wish to explain anything in the societary world.

The position just taken that every individual's reaction changes the environment brings with it another point. Examine the principle which M. Tarde puts central in all societary phenomena—the principle of imitation—and it must be conceived of in internal, and not in external, terms in order to make it valid. Mr. Bosanquet says:

Imitation is a bald and partial rendering of that complex reciprocal reference which constitutes social co-operation. To say that imitation is characteristic of society is like saying that repetition is the soul of design.²¹

Imitation cannot be made a solely external process; for its nature will not permit it. To make it such would be almost like a man holding a hammer on a rivet and another striking it, and then calling that process imitation.²² In societary processes this contact must be stated in inner terms. What is meant by this will be somewhat explained in the next paragraph but one.

²¹ *Mind*, N. S., Vol. VI, p. 7.

²² For a further consideration of this, see Part II, the discussion of Imitation.

Professor Giddings says:

[By consciousness of kind] I mean a state of consciousness in which any being, whether high or low in the scale of life, recognizes another conscious being as of like kind with itself.²³

It is about the subjective principle, he believes, that all social phenomena involving volition, and so motives, arrange themselves. Does not this bear a striking resemblance to that conscious reciprocal relationship between the self and its "other" which Hegel so forcibly pointed out in his *Logik*?²⁴ In fact, this ejective other-consciousness is recognized by present-day psychology as a necessary stage in the development of the self-notion.

When Professor Small says that "subjective interpretation"²⁵ may mean either of two things—one of which is: "the reading of the interpreter's personal equation into the thing in question, and that in this sense it deserves no further notice"²⁶—I am inclined to take issue with him, and for this reason: our problem is to *explain* social phenomena; consequently we cannot rest with mere description. If we cannot rest with description, we must study these phenomena more in their internal nature by reducing them to their elements. In the present case these elements are, in the first place, conscious selves, and then their interactions upon each other and upon their environment; the most important factor in societary phenomena, however, being the interaction of these selves upon each other. Now, when we deal with such conscious phenomena involving interacting wills, we can no longer assume the external, independent attitude. For the experiences which are the immediate antecedents and causes of these particular phenomena are to be found in the subjective experience of the individuals involved. But I, as an investigator, cannot get at those causes *directly*, since, by reason of each of us being individuals, I cannot have his experiences transferred to me, nor mine to him. Therefore, the only way for me to get at those

²³ *Principles of Sociology*, p. 17.

²⁴ *Mind*, N. S., Vol VI, p. 8.

²⁵ In his *Elements of Sociology*, PROFESSOR GIDDINGS uses the term "ejective interpretation" in place of the present term, "subjective interpretation."

²⁶ AMERICAN JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY, Vol. V, p. 639.

experiences, and to be able to get any causal explanation at all, is to examine my own consciousness when it has led to similar actions, and conclude that his inner experience leading to those actions was similar to my own.

There is another way of getting at that experience which was the cause of the given phenomena. The subject of these actions tells me why he acted thus; what it was that influenced his will into just that volitional discharge. But just as soon as he tells me, he has put his experience into words which are merely media of exchange or coin of the realm of inner, subjective experience, and so those words are translated back into inner subjective experience by me (into appreciatively descriptive, and not scientific, terms),²⁷ so that, whichever way it is looked at, that notion of appreciative interpretation, or understanding others by reading my own experience into them, is indispensable. Consequently, to get at societary fact it is a necessary preliminary that the subject connect himself vitally with the world of his investigation, so that he feels himself as part of that world, as having fellowship with it. And here we are beyond doubt in the world of appreciation, and so in the preserves of metaphysics. Furthermore, Professor Small seems to put an unfair interpretation on Professor Giddings's statement when he calls this reading in of subjective experience the reading in of the personal equation, since the term "personal equation" has acquired a bad meaning, owing to its standing for a lack of scientific exactness. Now, this meaning of the term is entirely inapplicable to Professor Giddings's term "subjective interpretation."

The discussion which has gone before may be utilized in advancing another point, which has no doubt become clear by this time, viz., that the interaction between individuals which furnishes the phenomena for sociology is in reality an internal interaction, and not simply external contact, such as is treated by physical science, and such as is required by physical causation. It was pointed out above that the causation involved in sociology is of a different sort from that involved in natural causation; that there is an internal element present. The formula for social evolution

²⁷ For a characterization of appreciatively descriptive terms see p. 356.

was found to be vastly different from that for cosmic evolution. We saw that, in order to understand the causes of social phenomena by going to individuals, we were required to get into terms of fellowship with the object of our investigation, so that the interaction from that point of view is found to be internal. The conception that all interaction is and must be internal has been current in philosophy since Lotze.²⁸ Professor Giddings realizes the necessity of such a conception when he says:

I have never thought or spoken of mere contact, whether hostile or friendly, as constituting association or a society. It is association *if*, and *only if*, accompanied by a consciousness on the part of each of the creatures implicated that the creatures with which it comes in contact are like itself.²⁹

This involves a recognition, though not necessarily conscious, of certain appreciatively descriptive terms as descriptive symbols whereby appreciative experiences are characterized, and only after such recognition can these terms be used.

Professor Small says: "The social fact is the incessant relation between three chief factors: nature, individuals, and institutions or modes of association between individuals."³⁰ Now, what is this more or less than the field of metaphysics? Metaphysics investigates the nature, meaning, and final meaning of nature, individuals, and the modes of association between individuals. Now, if the social fact is the "incessant relation" between these three, then, in order to understand that relation—and to understand that relation *is* the problem of sociology—we must first understand what the *inner nature* of those three is; for interaction that is external is a conception that, as Lotze has pointed out, involves all sorts of difficulties; leaving internal interaction as the only tenable alternative. But since sociology deals with interaction, and interaction demands the knowledge of the inner nature of the things interacting, then this interaction, which is the object of sociological investigation, cannot be understood unless we have *first* investigated the inner nature of the things interacting, and which from our starting-point are: nature and individuals.

²⁸ LOTZE, *Metaphysic*, Book I.

²⁹ *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. V, p. 750.

³⁰ AMERICAN JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY, Vol. V, p. 788.

Hence, metaphysical investigation is *necessary* in order to be able truly to get at the interrelations which sociology has for its province; for those interactions are such only by reason of the inner nature of the things concerned.

Sociology deals with selves, and these, in turn, lead us to conceive of the social situation as an interplay of wills.³¹ Now, if this is the case, then the ultimate term in sociological discussion is will. Taking the other side, metaphysical discussion leads to the outcome that interaction of things must be conceived of in terms of behavior; *i. e.*, the expression of an inner, might we say, motivity or activity, after the analogy of the self. But since transeunt action is impossible, and some internal spring is demanded, this can be stated only in terms of will. And so in the metaphysical sphere our ultimate term is will. As to whether this will is blind, or conscious and intelligent, we are not called upon to discuss. But, that aside, we have reduced our two fields—viz., sociology and metaphysics—in the last analysis, to the same terms.

Now, having gotten to the same ground-principle—or, rather, our metaphysical investigation having brought us analytically to this fundamental term—it is its business to follow out this term or principle in its various manifestations. By this I mean: an adequate investigation cannot be content with analysis to an ultimate principle. The analysis, if not accompanied by any other process, will leave us with an abstraction; and so one must proceed to the verification of the result of the analysis by tracing the principle thus dissected into its phenomenal manifestations, and thereby making “eine weitere Erörterung.”

Applying this to the case at hand, our metaphysical analysis has brought us to a will-conception as ultimate. Just as physics, having gotten the conception of energy, proceeds to study energy in manifestation, and it is this latter that furnishes much of the subject-matter of the science—always bearing in mind, however, that the original conception of energy must not be lost sight of, and that the subject-matter of the other part of the science is simply the working out of the principle—just so here. We have

³¹ BALDWIN, *Social and Ethical Interpretations*, 3d ed., p. 27.

gotten will as our ultimate principle; and when we find the principle most adequately manifested in conscious individuals and their activities, we find out that we are in the field of sociology, and have gotten there by undertaking a metaphysical investigation and not stopping at mere analysis, but by making it a complete and exhaustive investigation. In other words, we have followed out the principle of specification as well as that of homogeneity.

Now, taking the problem the other way, we can start with sociological facts and analyze them, and we find that the stages in the process will be: institutions, individuals; and that resolved further will give us the interaction of conscious wills; and so we have gotten to the principle which was found to be primary in the other method of considering the problem.

Does not the very nature of sociological investigation demand the point of view of appreciation rather than observation? Observation takes in mere cause-and-effect relations. But in sociological investigation these causes are, we have seen, of a different sort; for we cannot really understand social phenomena if we do not read our own individual experience into that of others.³² So that the contention is: by reason of its material, the point of view of observation unsupplemented as a method for sociology will not be adequate.

If you make your investigation entirely from the spectator's point of view, you will miss some of the richest elements in the content of sociological study. To get an adequate and explanatory notion of societary phenomena, a certain amount of appreciative penetration will be necessary. Now, if you go on the view of the indifference of subject and object, or the scientific method, then this cannot be included. The metaphysical method, however, demands community and fellowship; and so here the metaphysical method is more applicable than the purely scientific; and so the knowledge of sociology is metaphysical rather than physical.

The outer manifestations of society which the sociologist classifies of course belong to the world of description. But when we get to the real study of social phenomena, and want to get the inner springs of sociality—or, to speak in a physical analogy,

³² GIDDINGS, *Elements of Sociology*, pp. 341 ff.

the "energetics" of sociality—we must go to appreciation; for it seems to me that those motives or inner springs which lead to the interaction of conscious wills, and which are such an essential and self-expressive part of human life and activity, are *beyond* the sphere of description. They are part of our private selves, but are indispensable in the search for social causality.

Mr. Ward says that the subject-matter of sociology is human achievement;³³ but what men do is, after all, their natures working themselves out; so that the explanation comes back to the selves of the individuals, and so is appreciative.³⁴ It is a getting behind phenomena; and this is practically what he says when he holds that in pure sociology the object pursued is the *inner nature* of society.³⁵ Now, the inner nature of society is, of course, the individuals.

Just so soon as society is more than a mere aggregate of individuals, just so soon as there is some organization, there must be some purpose or aim of which it is the fulfilment. Such an aim in the lower forms of organization can arise on entirely empirical grounds; but when the case of the higher forms comes up, purely empirical grounds will be found insufficient, and for explanation we must go back to the inner nature³⁶ of the individual in whom, potentially, this form has existed; and so we are again in appreciation.

In the sphere of what Mr. Ward calls "practical" sociology, or Dr. Stuckenbergh "sociological ethics," the judgment of value asserts itself very strongly. In the lower departments of pure sociology there was much classifying and generalizing, and so exact description; but here description becomes inexact and shades over into appreciation. This is, indeed, a very normal thought-process, similar to the shading of the judgment of truth into the judgment of value. In this side of the question, sociology takes in the *possibilities* of development, and so, on the basis of an

³³ *Pure Sociology*, p. 15.

³⁴ For detailed argument for an appreciative moment in the self see Part II of this article.

³⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 4.

³⁶ MACKENZIE, *Introduction to Social Philosophy*, p. 34.

assumed ideal unity, efforts are made to approximate it. This is essentially a philosophical procedure.

Mr. Bosanquet says:

The point of view taken by M. Bernes (*Revue de métaphysique et de morale*, March, 1895) seems to recognize a double tendency in the body of science, such that the purely speculative—or, in our language, the indifferent—nature of mathematics finds its complement at the other extreme of the series in what for him is the practical spirit of sociology; the intermediate group of the natural sciences being, as I understand him, the chief meeting-ground of these two tendencies, neither of which can be wholly absent in any scientific endeavor. It is a detail of terminology that M. Bernes's phrase "practical" seems to me to approach in actual significance the philosophical expression "speculative." It means, as I read him, not the spirit of an art devoted to immediate action, but rather the spirit of a philosophy which divines, through the will no less than through the intellect, the impulse and the indications of a partially unrealized unity in the world which demands realization.³⁷

Mr. Bosanquet here adds that, if sociology admits the validity of such an impulse, and applies itself to the discovery of laws and forces which shall be capable of doing justice to this treatment, then a greater part of the distinction between it and philosophy will be done away.

After saying that the rôle of mere observer of facts is always a humble one, and that the really living element in the sciences is what the mind puts into the observation and which is not the object of observation, Mr. Mackenzie says:

And if this is the case even with regard to those sciences which are directed most entirely to phenomena that are capable of being externally perceived, it must hold to a much greater extent when the object is not any collection of facts, but rather a stream of tendency and aspiration. And when to this is added that we who observe the stream are ourselves a portion of it, and that our modifications of it may become a factor in the modification of its course, it becomes clear that a purely empirical study of society, however useful and even indispensable it may be as an adjunct to other inquiries, cannot of itself be made a satisfactory basis for a philosophy of life.³⁸

When he uses the term "philosophy of life," he seems to mean about the same thing that Messrs. Ward, Giddings, and Small mean when they talk of sociology—meaning an explanation of societary phenomena.

³⁷ *Mind*, N. S., Vol. VI, p. 4.

³⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 13.

Mr. Ward argues for a wide perspective on the part of the sociologist, since the case is analogous to that of a mountain viewed from a distance, which is an exquisite piece of symmetry, but when we are climbing it we see nothing but underbrush and fallen logs. What the sociologist wants to and must do is to view societary phenomena as a *unity*, so as to see the great uniformities and progressions in it. These he cannot see unless he has a wide perspective. Now, it seems to me that philosophy does just this. To inquire into the particular processes and phenomena is the province of the special physical sciences, just in the same way as the investigation of particular societary phenomena is the province of the special social sciences. Just so, as philosophy goes beyond the special sciences and looks into the general movements of things—*i. e.*, the unity and general teleological flow of things—so does sociology go beyond the particular social facts and views the association of individuals in its great relationships and trends of development. Now, it might be said: "Well enough, but you have not gotten beyond Spencer's notion of the unification of the sciences, and so where is your appreciative method?" And so we shall have to examine the nature of the concept of unity which sociology so confidently uses.

Unity is a principle which is felt rather than described. We can cognize identity, but unity must be conceived of after the analogy of the subject; though you might cognitively have a sort of collocation which might pass for unity. When you have unity you have the notion of an organism, and that is what Mr. Ward is advocating. Unity is not altogether appreciative, but largely so, and its essential nature is appreciative. When he says that this unity is gotten by generalization, he does not mean exactly what is ordinarily meant by the term.

As intelligence develops, the ability to generalize increases, and the stage is at length reached at which the mind sees much that the senses cannot apprehend. With the progress of science, this power is enormously enhanced and the true interpretation of nature begins.³⁹

Now, this true interpretation of nature must be philosophy.

The ordinary events of life go unnoticed, but there are certain events that are popularly regarded as extraordinary, notwithstanding the fact that

³⁹ WARD, *Pure Sociology*, p. 52.

the newspapers every day devote more than half their space to them. One would suppose that people would learn some time that fires, and railroad accidents, and mine disasters, and boiler explosions, and robberies, and defalcations, and murders, as well as elopements, liaisons in high life, seductions, and rape, were normal social phenomena after reading of every one of these and a hundred similar events every day throughout the course of a lifetime. But this enormous mass of evidence has no effect whatever in dispelling the popular illusion that such events are extraordinary, and the octogenarian whose eyesight will permit still pores over the daily news, as it is called, with the same interest as when he was a youth. There is nothing new in news except a difference in the names. The events are the same. It is this that Schopenhauer meant when he said that history furnishes nothing new, but only the continual repetition of the same thing under new names. And this is meant when we speak of generalization.⁴⁰

This is certainly a search for a unitary principle which is more than what is ordinarily called generalization. Is not this analogous to an individual manifesting himself in various ways, but always remaining a unity, or viewing an individual from various aspects? And when the person feels this individuality and unity in the whole of societary phenomena, is it not just as I perceive myself as a family self, or as a college self, and all the time I feel the general unity over, above, and through it all? Is not Mr. Ward's society, which is a unity, a large individual which the finite person appreciates in the same way as my self of this moment appreciates my individuality, so that, after all, the subject-object experience is but transcended so that the two are felt as one? Mr. Ward calls this the discovery of law in history; but, as a matter of fact, is it not more than this, though he does not admit it? Does it not have implications that he would hardly like to admit?

When the sociologist holds the theory of a biological organism as the analogue of society as a whole, has he not so far forth departed from a strictly empirical point of view, and gone beyond his own descriptive experience or the experience of others? When he argues for a view of society as a whole as an organism, he no longer confines himself to individuals and institutions; and his form of argument is not one that can be called strictly scientific induction, but rests on rather vague analogies, so that it rests

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

on probability rather than on demonstration; and its test of certitude is no longer a purely factual one, but one that rests on rational probability. This is all the more the case when M. René Worms, in his *Organisme et société*, argues that in the world of social facts the individual is not the only real; for the individual is an aggregation of cells and still has reality; and so he argues that the social organism is an individual and has reality. Now, this is essentially a metaphysical discussion and involves a metaphysical method. Mr. Spencer holds that the elements in a biological organism are concrete, but those of the social organism are discrete. But M. Worms holds that the continuity of the elements in the biological organism has less of continuity than have the elements of the social organism; since, when the biological elements are separated, the organism perishes; but when the elements of social structure are separated, they tend to be reunited, as *e. g.*, the unification of Italy. In comparison, the spaces between the cells of the biological organism are no farther separated than the individuals in the social organism. He says finally that society is a supra-organism which possesses all the characteristics of the individual organism, and more than that. This point helps to give the foregoing discussion a more general application, as it shows that the metaphysical side is not confined to a particular sort of sociological investigation, since we have shown that the more psychological type of sociologists, like Professor Giddings, Mr. Ward, and others, are involved in metaphysical conceptions, and here we see that the biological sociologists are also involved in them. All these theories, especially those resting on individual and collective will or social will, etc., are supra-scientific in that they seek the inner meaning and ultimate nature of societal phenomena rather than tracing merely causal relationships.

So our conclusion thus far might be roughly stated by saying that the two disciplines are directly related in that the causality and evolution in sociology are different from that involved in the physical sciences, and so require different treatment. They are related more particularly since, in order to understand the units and the interaction in social phenomena, we are directly led into

the metaphysical method and point of view, viz., that of appreciation.

Metaphysics has for its province the nature, meaning and final meaning of the content of experience. But, taking the very broad view of sociology which the investigation seems to warrant, someone may say that the outcome of our argument is a taking away of the distinction between sociology and metaphysics, and hopelessly mixing up the two. To this we reply that the objector fails to distinguish between all the *data* of experience, viewed *under one aspect* or from one point of view, on the one hand, and the whole of experience, on the other hand. For, it seems to me, the whole of experience, and all the data of experience (meaning by "data" the groundwork of experience), are not necessarily identical. On the basis of this distinction we can accept the very wide view of sociology, and admit that the basic facts of sociology are: nature, individuals, and the modes of association between individuals; and can further demand that there is involved a metaphysical investigation as to the three facts mentioned. And we could even, if it be necessary, admit that these three factors mentioned are all the data of experience, without surrendering our position that metaphysics and not sociology is the ultimate source of our explanation; for these are all the data of experience viewed under one aspect, from one point of view, viz., the sociological. But the metaphysical investigation at the outset, or during the sociological, in no wise exhausts the province of metaphysics. For metaphysics deals not only with the nature and meaning, but also with the *final meaning*, of what exists; and so the metaphysical investigation in the sociological considers simply the nature and meaning of these data, whereas the final meaning can be determined *only* at the *end* of the sociological investigation; and not necessarily then, for even with this broadest view of sociology it embodies all the data of experience only under one aspect, namely, the sociological; and to get the *final meaning*, which is the further problem of metaphysics at this point, it must consider all the data of experience, not only under this aspect, but under *every possible* aspect that experience can suggest. What is meant here is this: The particular sciences take a selected body of

phenomena, some particular portion of experience, and try to find the laws of its behavior. Metaphysics, on the contrary, may not select in this way. It has the problem of taking all the phenomena in experience, and not merely getting the law of their behavior, but getting that law into terms of some unitary principle which shall be adequate, not alone for each of the selected groups of phenomena individually, but also for any possible combination of groups as well as *all* the possible groups taken together. So the metaphysical investigation all along the line, and the admission of the extreme breadth of sociology, in no wise weaken the necessity of the demand for a metaphysical investigation at the end of the sociological; and not only at the end of this latter, but at the end of all the other possible aspects; nor does it weaken the necessity for a distinction between the two.

But the objector, who might be a thinker holding to the narrower view of the field of sociology, might say that this broad field of investigation which we are speaking about is not sociology at all. We in turn ask: What is it then, if it is not sociology? It certainly is not metaphysics, nor is it either chemistry, physics, or biology, psychology, or any other science which has any recognized status. Its field, and the data from which it starts, are certainly the data of what he calls sociology; only that here we do not restrict ourselves to arbitrary limits, but take the natural limits.

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[*To be concluded.*]